

health care costs for millions of Americans who are satisfied with their current health care coverage. It cuts Medicare and reduces benefits for seniors, such as Medicare Advantage, and will raise taxes on families and small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, we all agree that our health care system can be and should be improved; but, unfortunately, Members of Congress are not listening to the American people, and that is, more government is not the answer.

HEALTH INSURANCE FROM THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Republicans are craven in their obeisance to their health industry patrons who are so generous at campaign time. They are saying that they're going to offer a new national policy; they're going to free up the insurance industries to offer new national policies with no antitrust law from the Federal Government, no regulation by the States. They've come up with a new loophole for abuses. They have defined on page 122 of their bill, the Northern Mariana Islands—that is Jack Abramoff's lobby client—with their sweat shops and sex shops as a State so insurance companies can go to the Northern Mariana Islands and the only consumer protections that will apply for a policy you buy—one of these new, great, cheap national policies—will be the laws of the Mariana Islands. Buy a policy in Oregon, call the Mariana Islands insurance commissioner, whoever that might be—maybe Jack Abramoff when he gets out of jail—and they'll help you out.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. NEUGEBAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the American people from across the country came to the people's House to oppose a government takeover of their health care. They said, Washington, no politician or bureaucrat should interfere with our choice. And I agree.

My colleagues and I have an answer for their calls by putting forward a commonsense reform, legislation that reduces the deficit, lowers the insurance premiums and improves coverage for those with preexisting conditions. As a result of the House Republican bill, the CBO now confirms that families will see their health care premium reduced by 10 percent. Hardworking taxpayers can expect deficits to decrease by \$68 billion in the next decade.

The American people deserve choice. One size fits all does not work for them. Speaker PELOSI, the American people have said one thing yesterday. I hope you were listening. They said, Kill this bill.

TORT REFORM WOULD PAY FOR UNINSURED

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Budget Office has determined that tort reform would save Americans \$54 billion over the next decade. But reducing frivolous lawsuits against doctors and hospitals is not in the health care bill. That is because, according to former Democratic National Committee Chairman Howard Dean, White House officials "don't want to take on the trial lawyers." Tort reform eliminates the billions of dollars spent on meritless lawsuits and defensive medicine.

If Congress enacted tort reform, we could then provide catastrophic health care coverage to the long-term low-income uninsured. To reduce health care costs and help the uninsured, tort reform should be the first item in any health care bill.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. SCALISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, Speaker PELOSI's latest attempt at a government takeover of health care adds an extra \$730 billion in new taxes onto the backs of American small businesses and families. It cuts \$500 billion out of Medicare, which our seniors know is only going to lead to rationed care for them, and it will take away another 5.5 million jobs out of our economy.

You wonder, today, on the day that we broke the 10 percent mark that President Obama set right here when the stimulus bill was passed, the bill that he said would stop unemployment from exceeding 8 percent, unemployment went to 10.2 percent. Now that we're over 10 percent, when are the liberals running Congress going to realize that it's their policies, it's their taxing, it's their spending, cap-and-trade, card check. It's policy after policy that puts a target on the backs of business, and it is running millions of jobs out of this economy. When will it stop and they actually go and work with us Republicans who want to put commonsense reforms in place to lower the cost of health care and avoid preexisting conditions?

PELOSI-CARE KILLS JOBS

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, this morning we received grim news. More Americans have lost their jobs, and we now see the unemployment rate at 10.2 percent, the highest in over 25 years. The stimulus bill has done little to prevent rising unemployment, only creating a

handful of jobs in each of our congressional districts. Only 67 in mine, in the 16th Congressional District of Pennsylvania.

Now, instead of concentrating on how we can restart our economic engine, we start to consider a health care bill that could cost millions of more Americans their jobs in the next decade. Ways and Means Committee staff, working with the Congressional Budget Office and Joint Tax Committee figures, estimate that Speaker PELOSI's bill could cost 5.5 million American jobs over the next 10 years. It is inconceivable that this House will consider killing jobs during a recession.

A government takeover of health care will only employ more tax collectors and bureaucrats. We need real health care reform, the kind that focuses on reducing costs, improving quality of care and expanding access.

CLOSED HEALTH CARE RULE

(Mrs. BIGGERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that Republicans continue to offer constructive ideas to improve the health care bill, Democrats still insist that we are the party of "no." Earlier today I submitted an amendment to improve the Medicare waste, fraud and abuse enforcement provisions in H.R. 3962, and Democrats will say "no" to even allowing my amendment to get an up-or-down vote.

According to a recent report by "60 Minutes," Medicare loses over \$60 billion a year to fraud. My amendment would strengthen the Medicare enrollment process, expand certain standards of participation and reduce erroneous payments. There is no excuse for continuing to make payments to empty buildings and businesses that have never existed.

Mr. Speaker, this closed process has prevented me and many of my colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, from offering intelligent and well-constructed amendments that would save taxpayers money and improve health care access for all Americans.

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this government takeover of health care.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Our President said, "Our health care is too costly," and I agree. Yet before us in Washington are bills that tax wheelchairs, heart monitors, pacemakers and your insurance. These taxes make a family's health insurance cost \$4,000 more. The President said that defensive medicine may be contributing to unnecessary costs, and I agree with the